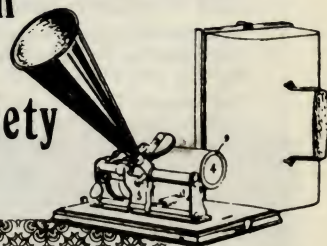


# The Hillandale News

The official journal of  
**The City of London  
Phonograph and  
Gramophone Society**  
Inaugurated 1919



No. 102

JUNE 1978



*Cellophone console gramophone  
with all-wood tone-arm and internal  
horn and electric motor driving  
the turntable via a rubber friction  
wheel, the centre pivot of the turntable  
being an idler - an early example of the  
type of drive commonplace in multi-speed  
turntable decks of the 1950's onwards.*

# SOCIETY RULES

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1. That the Society shall be called THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH and that its objects shall be the social intercourse of its member study of sound reproducing apparatus, as well as its application
2. That the Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice Secretary, Financial Treasurer and Meetings Secretary, who shall meet in October, and who shall be ex-officio members of the
3. That the management of the Society be vested in a Committee, Meeting, and with power to co-opt, and that its duties shall be to objects. Written notice must be given to the Secretary one clear ing of any resolution proposing to amend these rules.
4. New members (ladies or gentlemen) may be elected on the nom meeting of the Society on the payment of an annual subscription Meeting, which is renewable twelve calendar months thereafter.
5. The financial Treasurer shall, once in every year, submit a state Auditor elected by the Society and shall furnish a Balance Sheet for the inspection of members at each Annual General Meeting.

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Editor/Publisher: Bill Brott, [redacted] West Finchley, London

**TREASURER'S NOTES:** In future, would members please send all monies in Sterling (cheques, Postal Orders, etc.) direct to the Treasurer, *together with all orders for goods*, as this will simplify our accounting system, and avoid double handling.

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Overseas members are requested to send STERLING DRAFTS or banknotes, as check clearances here carry a high commission rate. The Society no longer operates within the Post Office Giro system. New Zealand and Australian Postal Orders are acceptable in the U.K. To save postage in mailing receipts, these are sent out with the goods or next magazine to members. PLEASE MAKE OUT ALL CHECKS AND DRAFTS PAYABLE TO "THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY".

HEREFORD. Details from the Secretary, D.G. Watson, [redacted] Tupsley, Hereford.

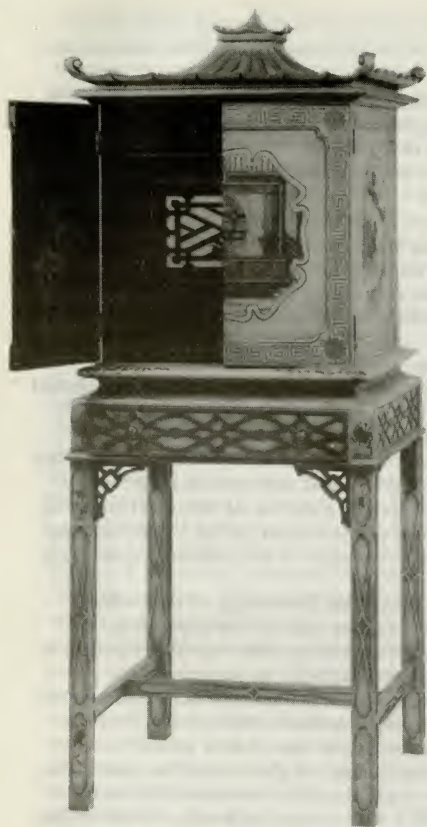
MIDLANDS. Details from the Secretary, P. Bennett, [redacted] Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton, Staffs, WV4 5DE. Phone: [redacted]

MANCHESTER. Details from the Secretary, Clive Thompson, [redacted] Mosley Common, Worsley, Lancs.

VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA. Details from C. Gracie, [redacted] Cavendish, Victoria 3408, Australia.

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE that all money should now be sent to our Treasurer, B.A. Williamson, [redacted] Liverpool, L16 1LA.





*An Aeolian Vocalion gramophone in oriental cabinet. There was a fashion in the early - mid 1920s for oriental lacquer finishes on cabinet gramophones, usually using standard cabinets, but in this case the manufacturers have gone the whole hog, making cabinet and stand in a sort of 'Chinese Chippendale' style with a Pagoda roof for the lid. Like most Vocalions, it has a 'Graduola' volume control, but alas someone has taken out the motor and tone-arm on this example, to fit a two-speed electric deck.*



*Wurlitzer juke-box, 1936. One of the earliest 'Light-up' Wurlitzers (i.e. the interior is illuminated), this has a figured walnut case which makes a welcome relief from the chromium and plastic of later models.*

*Photos courtesy of "Christies"*

# People, Paper and Things

BY GEORGE FROW

In March our Editor Bill Brott had to enter hospital for a serious operation, and I am glad to report that he is once more on his feet and making good progress. The task of editing the April issue fell into my lap, and I take all blame for errors and omissions, of which there were several; so if your article failed to appear, it has no doubt made the running in this issue. To have more material than can be accommodated is the dream of any editor; please keep sending it in and it will appear in due course.

George Fudge ( ) Bridgwater, TA 65 NU, England) tells me he is manufacturing larger straight Edison horns, the ten-panelled STANDARD type, 31 in. long and 19 in. at the mouth. Although originals of these 10, 11 and 12 panelled horns turn up nearly everywhere in the world, they were never officially sent here except with the IDELIA Phonograph and are seen very rarely. George says that because of the time and work involved he has to charge £50 each, and are strictly on a *collected* basis, being over-size for the post.

While on the topic of Edison horns, Bill Moore ( ) Morgan Hill, Calif. 95037) who already makes reproduction Edison cases and covers, is making Music Master (wooden) horns, and should be contacted direct. Reproduction decals for these are obtainable from A.F. Seftl ( ) Daly City, Calif. 94017) for \$5.25 post paid, or \$5.60 in California, including local tax.

Spain would seem to have given more notice to the Centenary than many countries last year, judging from correspondence and items received from our member M.G. Montejano of Madrid, who exchanges letters regularly. The December issue of *Ritmo* (Rhythm) gives over most of its 200 pages to the historical aspect of the invention, and includes a number of photographs new to me. Some of the articles appear by arrangement with other magazines, but undoubtedly its greatest obligation is to the catalogue of last Summer's exhibition at the Royal Scottish Museum.

A tight-rope exercise, not confined to *Ritmo*, is the listing of 'The Greatest Recordings of the Century', which like 'Your Hundred Best Tunes' will surely always be a personal matter and not the fancy of an editor or panel. Besides dealing with the past *Ritmo* presents the reader with biographical details of people in music today, some of whom will become respected in musical journalism and music in years to come.

Sr. Montejano has also sent me a copy of the December *Sonido* (Sound), which gives its centre pages to an article on Edison and an interview with another Spanish member Francisco Arellano, whose collection is depicted in some quantity and detail. The dates on some models are, to say the least, better quoted to a prospective purchaser than to a magazine which could well be used by students of the hobby, but that is the common error of putting too much faith in patent plates. Francisco Arellano exhibited this collection in Barcelona last year, and amongst them he has a fine Edison CONCERT with hearing tube rail, a Stroh violin, an early Edison tin-foil, the earliest GEM model, and a coin-slot Graphophone, all items that must be as scarce as hens' teeth in the Iberian Peninsula.

Spain has also run to a necktie bearing the Centenary logotype, and a similar T-shirt, and I have also received this same symbol as a sticker printed in Catalanian, as well as Spanish. As I have already said, that Country has gone into the Phonograph Centenary 'in a big way', and I am grateful to our friends there for letting us know. Sr. Montejano asks if there is anyone making reproduction Bettini horns, or has an original for disposal, and I am happy to pass this inquiry to the membership. His address is ( ) Madrid-2, Spain.

The Phonograph Centenary Journal of the (American) Audio Engineering Society is a bulky publication, and thanks to my London friend Bob Walters, the Society now has a copy in the archive.

In a letter from Japan, Toru Funahashi relates how he took part in the annual celebration on February 11th of Edison's birthday at the shrine in Kyoto where the Edison Memorial Monument has been standing since 1924. It seems that people, mostly from the electrical industries, gather there annually to pay homage to Edison and his works, particularly his light bulb, which utilised bamboo fibre found growing in the district, for its carbon filament. Toru Funahashi relates that he has now been asked to become a member of the club behind this annual tribute to Edison's work.

For those on the lookout for sightings of early phonographs and gramophones in films and television plays, I can report one in the 1934 Jessie Matthews film "Evergreen", show recently on British television; an Edison FIRESIDE, fitted with a tinplate funnel horn appeared in a court-room scene towards the end of the film, and was 'played' with Jessie Matthews' voice dubbed in. Gramophones of all sorts quite often appear in drawing-room scenes in television plays set in Edwardian or Great War times, occasionally these are 'played', sometimes



with the front doors closed, sometimes without the turntable revolving or the sound-box being lowered if seen at a distance. Fundamentally it's a question of cost and convenience, the machine being drawn from a store-room and almost certainly lacking any maintenance, and it's so easy to bring in a tape recording with hiss superimposed. Only this week there was presented at a local theatre a professional season of the 1916 farce "A Little Bit of Fluff", and in one act a very nasty gramophone appeared as background, and on it was a black 19 in. Edison Phonograph horn; wisely it was kept well to the back of the stage.

Dennis Norton tells me of a possible gathering at Bromsgrove sometime this Summer, and I hope this materialises, as this is the one opportunity we have in Britain of getting as many members as possible together in one spot at one time.

The Society's good friend and member V.K. Chew retires from the Science Museum this Spring, and will be much missed by all of us who have come to know him over the last two decades. He has always made himself available as a patient mentor to visitors from all parts interested in the early talking machine, although his stewardship has embraced more and more the ever-growing departments of the Museum's treasures. We shall miss him and look forward to knowing his successor. He will retire with the thought that during his tenure, one section in particular of the acoustics gallery has had increasing attention from collectors, appreciative research has ousted quizzical curiosity, and that his own contribution has included "Talking Machines"; this is a work much in demand all over the civilised world, and likely to remain the first or second essential on any collector's bookshelf. All of us who know Kenneth Chew as a friend admire his gentle manners, are grateful for his quiet kindnesses, and aware of his enjoyment of worthwhile things, and we wish him many many years of happy retirement in his beloved City of London, where we hope he will continue to pursue his music and cultural interests for a long time.

The famous reference about a sealed package being deposited at the French Academy of Sciences is familiar to all students of recording history, and introduces us to the rather severe looking Charles Cros, whose theory of capturing sound and reproducing it occurred in the same year as Edison demonstrated his phonograph. In a B.B.C. radio programme on April 14th, Melvin Harris looked for a half-hour into the life and background of Charles Cros, who turned out to be very much more of a colourful character than the one or two usual photographs of him suggest. Melvin Harris has the knack of pushing further into this sort of subject which is so often lightly touched on in a passing reference; he has become renowned for his probing in some depth in difficult pastures where little is known of what lies beneath, and members will recall his radio and Society presentations on early wind soloists on cylinders and discs. As Melvin Harris's researches showed, Charles Cros was quite an outstanding fellow who excelled in whatever he turned his mind to, languages, music, painting, mathematics, chemistry and physics, and writing poetry, and an ability with early photographic processes brought the idea of recording early sound waves on a smoked glass disc, and engraving these marks into a metal disc. However, immediate lack of the necessary 30,000 francs or a backer for having the machine made, delayed its development, and by the time arrangements were concluded, Edison had announced his invention, and it looked as if Cros' project had been leaked by the unscrupulous, and by mid-1878 he made details of his invention open to the public.

Cros made an inadequate living largely by writing comic poetry for entertainers and died in August 1888, disappointed that for so much of his life he had never been taken seriously. It is of course unreasonable to try to compress the gist of a half-hour programme into these few lines, but I hope this conveys some inkling of the research that made up the programme. Even in translation the poems that were so excellently read by Miles Kington showed what a lively and humorous mind Cros must have had, in spite of his achievements just being that little bit too late. A translation of Cros' paper has appeared in HILLDALE NEWS in the past few years, but the present lack of an index makes it difficult to trace the edition.

With the death in retirement of the urbane Raymond Stanley Noble (b.1903), another link disappears from the pre-war recording world; Ray Noble was a musical director for the Gramophone Company from 1928 to 1934, taking over from Carroll Gibbons. He conducted studio orchestras in hundreds of recordings, either as one of the Mayfair Orchestra combinations or as accompaniment to singers of the day. At first his name did not appear on the New Mayfair Orchestra recordings, but in time it did so and became synonymous with a polished performance. In 1934 he travelled to America, where he formed his own orchestra, firstly in New York, then Los Angeles, the British vocalist Al Bowlly remaining with him until 1939. It was considered unusual in the twenties for a young man with a Public School background to go into the dance band world, but Noble gained distinction, both as conductor and composer, and it is difficult to think of any other Briton, apart from Spike Hughes, who was able to break into the hard dance and jazz circles of America and get to the top.

# Midland Branch Report of the Edison Phonograph Centenary Exhibition

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*HELD AT THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE MUSEUM FROM 7th  
TO 24th SEPTEMBER, 1977.*

At the invitation of the Director and the Curator of the City of Birmingham Science Museum, we were invited to mount an exhibition of phonographs, gramophones and records and cylinders and associated literature to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the invention of the phonograph by Mr. Edison.

It was intended at first to run from 7th to 17th Sept., but public demand persuaded the authorities to extend the exhibition for a further week, which of course we were delighted to agree to.

Approximately 80 talking machines of all periods were exhibited and we were able to cover an almost complete range from an original tin-foil machine (owned by the Museum) to a Pye electric machine from 1950.

The majority of the machines are the personal property of members of the branch, but gaps were filled by a number of non-members to whom we were very grateful.

In addition to machines, we exhibited a range of cylinder boxes from the U.K. the U.S.A. and elsewhere. Also three cases of records showing a variety of labels and materials from which records were made. A comprehensive selection of gramophone needle tins was another feature.

Tribute is hereby paid to the Curator of the Museum and his staff, who provided the necessary show cases and tables which housed our various machines etc. Also the help given by these gentlemen was invaluable to the smooth running of the exhibition.

The public responded well and the attendance was quite rewarding. Most of the time we were able to steward the exhibition by attending on a rota system to give advice to the public. In some instances we were able to introduce new members to our Society, and one or two members undertook to provide repair facilities to machines in need of overhaul. On each of the three Saturdays of the exhibition there were times when we were almost overwhelmed with visitors. We demonstrated many of the machines from time to time, and we felt that this fact made the exhibition far more popular than if we had merely held a static show.

We were pleased to welcome Society members from some of the other branches including the London headquarters.

A leaflet giving a brief outline of the exhibition was available to members of the public.

In retrospect we felt that all the hard work put into making this a comprehensive exhibition of talking machines was worth while, and it was a labour of love for all those involved.





*General view of gramophone section, showing Gramophone Company machines, Pathe machines, two Klingsor variants and a Stentorphone, (extreme left).*



*Part of the record display*



*Centre front, a Pigmy Grand Gramophone, centre near a Durophone, a Berliner, early Gramophones, an Excelsior (right front) and two Nerona variants.*



*Mostly phonographs, two tinfoils at centre, a Gillett phonograph at left centre, an Edison electric to its left, Home, Triumph and Concert at upper rear.*



Northwood,  
Middlesex,  
HA6 1RW.

10th April, 1978

Dear Mr. Brott,

*THE CENTENARY OF RECORDED SOUND*

I have read with interest the letters from Messrs. FitzPatrick and Pengelly reproduced on pages 24 and 25 of the April issue of "The Hillandale News". Taken together, they provide a complete explanation of the muddle which occurred in connection with the recording of Jose Collins used as an insert in the above programme; clearly, it was not due either to lack of observation (at least, in the visual sense) on Mr. Pengelly's part, or to his having been misled by Mr. FitzPatrick, as was speculated in my letter to you of 11th November. My apologies for any heartburning which might have been caused to either of them! I wrote, of course, on the assumption that, in preparing the programme, Mr. Pengelly had visited Mr. FitzPatrick and himself made or supervised the recording of the acoustic machine; apparently, the process of BBC programme - compilation is in fact more complicated than this.

It would be tragic if, as a result of the correspondence which has arisen from this matter, those responsible for the programme were left with the impression that listeners are interested only for the purpose of pointing-out such errors as may occur, and were thereby discouraged from further efforts. On the contrary, it is to be hoped that they will see what has been written as evidence that there are people "out there" who are keenly interested in, and have an appreciation of, what they are doing. I take the opportunity to repeat the sentiment expressed in the last paragraph of my letter of 11th November, that "The Centenary of Recorded Sound" was a fine programme, and that we could do with many more like it.

I see from the Diary of Events given on page 3 of the new issue that Radio Solent is broadcasting a weekly programme of vintage records; alas! I cannot receive this. BBC Radio London, please repeat! I wrote in October last year to Head of Recording Services, Radio making a plea for programmes of this nature to be broadcast by one or other of the services and ventured to enclose a tape, compiled from my own collection, to illustrate the sort of thing which I thought might be done, but up to the date of this present letter I have received no reply.

Yours sincerely,

D.E. Haines

Herne Farm,  
Petersfield,  
Hampshire.  
26.2.78

Dear Sir,

*I write the following as it may be of interest to fellow readers in your next issue of the Hillandale News.*

*Being a modest collector of phonographs, gramophones & records etc., my name was passed to an elderly Miss Reeves who is the proud owner of a Columbia portable (1931). She asked if I would put the machine back in working order and obtain needles. Having duly put things right, I understand that she and her sister enjoyed many happy hours with the 78's she had.*

*However, on Monday the 20th, a very upset Miss Reeves rang me to say that the gramophone was running very well but she had just purchased two records that are 'very very thin and much lighter than the ones she has' and when she tried to play them the needle 'churned them up' making a horrible noise.*

Yours faithfully,

C.A. Mace

# A Hundred Years, Not Out! (ARCHIE AND I MEET AGAIN.)

BY FRANK ANDREWS

"A hundred years, not out, eh?"

I was having a snack in the Science Museum's restaurant and I recognised the voice immediately, so it was no surprise to see, standing behind me, Archie Greenhorn, whom I had not seen for a year or so.

"What are you talking about?", I asked, rather peevishly, although I knew quite well to what he was referring but after a year of reading, listening and visiting various parts of the country with respect to the centenary of the talking machine, I was becoming a little satiated.

"Oh come off it, Andrews", (he was more familiar with me now that he had known me for some time), "You know what I'm talking about, A Hundred Years of Recorded Sound".

I finished the last of my sandwich and coffee.

"You are about twenty years too . . . ."

"Late", he interrupted, "Okeh! Okeh! Okeh!" (holding up his hands!), "So it's a hundred years, not out, or recorded sound capable of being reproduced - I think we all know that by now!"

For the first time I was becoming irritated by Archie, he was becoming a bit of a "know-all", and if there is one thing that a "know-all", such as I, cannot abide it is another "know-all" opening his mouth too widely!

"I reckon it is about time you changed your name from Greenhorn to something more appropriate", I sarcastically remarked, but with a grin, "What about Archimedes Knowell?"

"As a matter of fact I have already changed my name; I am now Archimedes Savant".

"Ou la la!", I could not help exclaiming, and continued, "Anyway, if you are using the sporting term of a "hundred, not out", I do not entirely hold that that is true about the number of years that sound has been generally recorded for reproduction. There was a break in continuity with the failure and abandonment of the tin foil phonograph, only ended by the appearance of the Tainter graphophones in 1885 (six off) with the new method of recording, and Edison's subsequent perfected phonograph, using the same method, in 1887. I gather we do not have a hundred years of recording in our archives, the first twelve years have left us with practically nothing. In my opinion, 1981 should be celebrated equally as well as 1977 has been!"

I was skating on thin ice, I knew, but I was feeling perverse.

"You seem to forget", Archie retorted, "That the tin foil phonograph, and machines of similar construction, were in constant use, somewhere or other, right up until the appearance of the graphophones, gramophones and perfected phonographs, both here and in America".

"Not at all. It is only because there was such a limited amount of use made of the tin foil type of phonograph that any argument can be sustained for 1977 having been a hundred years, "not out". There was no large development, Edison gave up trying to improve his invention, and Charles Cros' invention had not been put into practice. Who needed talking machines, anyway? The only trade being done in England, since the invention, was by the London Stereoscopic & Photograph Company, who manufactured and sold the instruments solely as scientific novelties. There was no public demand. The phonograph had made no impact on life, in general, such as the telephone had, and it is probably true to say that the great expansion and acceptance of all classes of talking machines did not take place until efficient spring clockwork motors were employed as the motive power in the mid-eighteen-nineties."

"Then what would you substitute for a "Hundred Years of Recorded Sound" my controversial friend?", I was asked, "You appear to be looking for an argument!"

I was, and I felt like having one! I was warning to the subject although I was on weak ground. I hedged!

"That is difficult to answer", I admitted, "If we could leave out the word "sound", then a "Hundred Years of the Talking Machine" would be correct, but it would have conveyed nothing to the public."

"You mean that the title used by me, and others, implied that one could have expected to hear sounds a hundred years old with subsequent recordings from the next hundred years?"

"I think that is what members of the general public might have expected from the various exhibitions - don't you?"

"Well, what would you have called the various exhibitions of 1977?"

"The Centenary of the Invention of Talking Machines by Cros and Edison", I replied, but before my questioner could interrupt me, I added "I know that reads and sounds too long a title, and might convey nothing to the general public, but if one was to drop the names of Cros and Edison, it would convey even less. To use Edison's name only would not do justice to Cros' invention which was of an entirely different character to Edison's, and was the basis of the gramophone's invention."

"Are you arguing that the gramophone, like the phonograph, was also a hundred years not out?"

"Yes I am. Compare Cros' instructions with Emil Berliner's first gramophone method of 1887 and you will see there is little difference. The acid etching technique developed from that, I have heard that Berliner, before he proceeded with his experiments, made sure that Cros' patent of 1878 was no longer valid."



"So what you are really saying is that there was not a hundred years, not out, with recorded sound, although there was with talking machines, but that recorded sound, capable of being recorded, had two innings?"

"Yes, because Cros' invention of April 1877 was not used until 1887, the photo-engraveure method, and Edison's indenting method, of July to December 1877, was abandoned by him by 1882, and again in 1887."

"Why 1887?"

"The first acceptable method of recording was known by then; the second innings of sound recording, and, as you know, the Bells and Tainter had patented this method in 1886, so when Edison returned to his phonograph, to meet the challenge of the Tainter graphophones, he had to try and improve his tin foil indenting phonograph without infringing the new patented method. He worked on his tin foil method, it was publicised that he had achieved success and that the perfected phonographs would use the tin foil indenting method but, of course, when the perfected phonograph did appear, it used the Bells-Tainter method of recording and reproducing, the tin foil indenting method having been abandoned for the second time."

"You have told me all this before - why do you keep harping on it?"

"Because I consider that the Bells-Tainter recording method was the most important of all the inventions connected with the talking machines and yet how much space or reading matter was devoted to them in the exhibitions, the men who made the invention on which the whole of the recording industry, for over half a century, relied for recording purposes? Not Edison's invention. Not Cros' invention. Not Berliner's invention, developed from Cros. However, although the Bells and Tainter had applied their invention to both discs and cylinders, and to the vertical cut and the lateral cut, by October 1881, it was not until 1887, or thereabouts, that the graphophone appeared for sale; yet the graphophone was not a new invention, it was an adaptation of Edison's cylinder playing machines, just as the Berliner Gramophone, of the same year, was an adaptation of Cros' suggested disc machines, and not of Edison's disc phonograph."

"So, I take it, you hold the opinion that October 1981 should be marked by a centenary exhibition to celebrate the Bells and Tainter's wax cutting method of recording?"

"Owing to the neglect of the two Scotsmen and the Yorkshireman (Gaisberg says Tainter was a Yorkshireman) in last year's celebrations, I certainly do believe it is time these men were honoured and that a comprehensive selection of the documentary evidence of their experiments, which used to be housed at the Smithsonian Institute, should be made public, along with any apparatus that is still extant. After all, except for the acid-etched records and matrices still remaining from "Berliner" days, our recorded heritage, up to the late 1940's, rests on recordings made from wax masters as far as cylinders and discs are concerned. I am ignoring the sound-film in this debate".

"Do you really believe the Bells and Tainter will be honoured?"

"No. In the public's awareness the Bells and Tainter are not appreciated, it is all Edison and Berliner, partly because these two gentlemen were always associated with their inventions and companies in later years, whereas the Bells and Tainter did not become so associated, and partly because the gramophone and the phonograph were distinctive machines, the one to the other, whereas the graphophones, of both varieties, were clearly seen to be derived from the other two. Another factor operating against the good name of the Bells and Tainter, was the acquisition of their patents by the American Graphophone Company of America, who used their rights in the patents to harass the interests of the Edison faction, thus associating the Bells and Tainter with the "baddies", with the Edison interests filling the role of the "goodies"!"

"Do you think Berliner will be honoured in 1987?" asked Archie.

"I should think that highly likely, especially as there are three major world companies which can point to their origins as having connections with Emil Berliner. If the Bells and Tainter are not to be honoured in their own right, I should hope that the Berliner celebrations will not overlook the honour that is due to them. The Berliner interests were only too pleased to utilise the wax cutting process, once the patents had expired!"

"It seems to me that you are deliberately trying to minimize the achievements and importance of Edison and his invention," Archie accused.

"I thought that would be your probable re-action", I responded. "I am not surprised. There is a whole history of argument about the merits of Edison and his invention of the phonograph, from inventors, dealers and the general public, going back to the first years of the century and, it seems to me, the Edison sympathisers have always been particularly sensitive to any comments which tended to show Edison in a less than favourable light and which in any way detracted from his greatness, as they saw it. The pro-Edison, anti-Edison argument, once thrown open to debate by some such question as "Who invented the talking machine?", would carry on for months in the trade periodicals, many of the participants having experiences of the trade reaching back to earliest days of the perfected phonographs and "toy" gramophones."

"What is your estimation of the facts then?", There was a touch of sarcasm in Archie's voice as he asked me this.

"I think I have made my opinion clear by what I have already been saying to you this afternoon", I ventured, "To the question "Who invented the Phonograph?", there is only the one answer and that is, "Edison invented the tin foil phonograph in 1877", but when someone asked in, say 1906, "Who invented



the phonograph?", they did not have the tin-foil phonograph in mind, but the phonographs then in use, and there was no direct answer to that, hence the arguments, with the same thing applying if the words "gramophone" or "talking machine" were used instead of "phonograph"; the questioners were asking about the machines they were familiar with, not the museum proto-types."

"I can understand that, all machines and records, by then, had elements of all the inventors and to argue, in 1906, that the phonograph of that year was the invention of Edison, that the graphophone of that year was the invention of the Bells and Tainter, and that the Gramophone was the invention of Cros and Berliner was too facile an answer."

"Quite; but if the question had been asked, 'Who invented the method of sound recording in use to-day?', then there would have been no argument, and it does not matter how wonderful or how inept the reproducing machines were at that time, they were all of them useless without an adequate recording method to provide the various types of finished records for the machines."

"Nobody asked that question then?"

"Not as far as I can gather, and any chance of it being asked was obscured by the supporters of the phonograph and the supporters of the gramophone, each claiming that theirs was the best method of making and reproducing records, the phonograph system being referred to as the Edison system or cut, when in fact it was the Bells and Tainter system which was being used! The Edison system went out with the disappearance of the tin foil phonograph. The gramophone enthusiasts took the phonograph's supporters at their word, and also spoke of the phonographs using the "Edison Cut", speaking of the gramophone as using the "Berliner Cut", which it did not as it too used the lateral wax cut of the Bells and Tainter, which they had experimentally demonstrated in October 1881."

"Do you know, you are making out a case on behalf of the Bells and Tainter, which suggests to me that most of the past history which we have been given about the talking machine has been somewhat of a confidence trick. Is this how you see the matter?"

No, I do not think there has been any considered confidence trick but I do think that too much acclaim has been awarded to some of the inventions and their inventors, over the years, to the detriment of others, and owing to the continued commercial continuity of the former, the latter's claims have become more and more neglected and that, in the history of things as they were, the latter have almost been forgotten and we have been left with a distorted account."

I could see Archie was a little dubious, Edison and Berliner are celebrated names in the history of the talking machine, especially Edison, and to put the Bells and Tainter and, perhaps, Cros on their level was not going down too well with him.

"I'm not convinced about your criticism of the story of the talking machine as we have it today, - I take it you were not very pleased with the Exhibitions which were staged during the year, you would have staged them differently of course?", Archie's sarcasm was becoming more pronounced.

"Well I have given the matter some thought", I said as modestly as I knew how, and what I envisage would be a three tier arrangement, at the starting point of an exhibition, carrying the story on to whatever point was desired, which would eventually close to two levels, and then to one level, unless one wanted to bring in sound on film, when two tiers would be necessary all the time."

"You will have to explain that a little more."

"Yes, Well let us suppose that there is going to be an exhibition in 1981 to commemorate the Bells and Tainter's invention of cutting into wax to make a recording, and we call the exhibition "One Hundred Years of Commercially Recorded Sound", (to which Archie gave an obvious snigger of contempt). "Now, in the first showpiece, we have three tiers, the first two have nothing upon them, the third tier has the date 1856/7 and a Leon Scott exhibit of some relevance to the Phonograph, - that is all. The next showpiece continued the three tier arrangement, the 1856/7 level is now marked 1856/7 to 1877, and an exhibit demonstrating Cros invention, with the April date prominent, is shown. On the first tier is shown an exhibit of Edison's tin foil phonograph with the date 1877, July to December suitably prominent. The tier in the middle is left blank".

"Why leave the middle tier blank?"

"Because, I hope that the first two exhibits, being separated, with no reference between the two, would establish the uniqueness of the Scott/Cros inventions and the Edison invention."

"What will you have in the third exhibit?"

"The Top tier would have the date 1878 and something about Cros' patent, the middle would remain blank, and the first, also dated 1878, would have a mention of Edison's British patents and tin-foil apparatus. Not until the next exhibit would the middle tier be used".

"And that", suggested Archie, "would be for your precious Bells and Tainter invention?" - I felt like thumping him one!

I controlled my annoyance but agreed with him.

"And the year would be 1881, with each tier so marked. There would be nothing on the third tier, but something to show the Bells and Tainters experiments on the middle, and further Edison tin foil material on



the first. The next exhibit would be for the year 1887. All tiers would be dated, and, preferentially, each tier would be a continuous, colour different from the other two. The third tier would exhibit Berliner's first gramophones, as an extension of Cros' ideas, being on the Scott/Cross tier. The middle tier would have the first of the Tainter Graphophones which went into use, with patent documentation; and the first tier, the Edison tier, would have an account of Edison's attempt to improve the tin foil phonograph, and a description of the perfected phonograph. The Edison tier would be eliminated, once the graphophone was known to have been made to accommodate the Edison type cylinders, circa 1892/3, by which time the Gramophone, on the other tier, would have become an acid etching machine, and these two tiers would continue with the cylinder playing machines on one level and the disc machines on the other level, taking in such things as the spring motors and other developments, until May 1900 was reached, when the two tiers would be continued, but the colour changed to one for both tiers, signifying the wax cut taken on by all sides in the industry."

"When would you drop to one level then?"

"In 1929, when the Edison business gave up the talking machine, with a mention that the Ediphone and the Dicataphone carried the invention on into the future, continuing the first use to which the phonograph and graphophone was originally utilized - a point to be stressed at their first evolvement".

"So 1900 was the crucial point, in your estimation?"

"In Great Britain, yes. The only good method of sound recording was at last open to the whole of these who wanted to make use of it. It was a point reached similar to the abolition of the requirement to have a man walking with a red flag in front of the motor car. Within two years the products of the industry came spewing forth, which makes collecting so interesting today". "Well, Archie, that's how I would arrange my dream exhibition, fantastic as it may seem to you. - Lord, is that the time? I really must be off."

"Cheerio, Andrews," he shook me by the hand, and then he peered into my face and said, "I think you are "bonkers"! - and he left, and I had nothing to say. Me, - Frank Andrews, - I had nothing to say!!

## London Meeting on 5th April 1978

*AT DEBENHAMS, OXFORD ST. W.1.*

The London April meeting was held at Debenhams, Oxford Street by Dave Roberts. Members who were involved with the Society's Exhibition last year will know that Dave is a man for getting things done - and not just by halves. This spirit was evident at the April meeting.

From his own collection Dave displayed and operated some 22 machines all in splendid working order. The theme of the recital was Dave's experiences (and obvious success) in the Auction Rooms, the machines on show being the result of these experiences. Commentary on each machine was pre-recorded on tape so that while it was being given, the machines could be prepared for playing.

Cylinder machines demonstrated included an Edison Standard with combination for 4-minute Amberol cylinders; a Home with Model C reproducer; a Fireside B; a Triumph of 1904 with conversion for Blue Amberols; a 2-minute Standard with 4'6" brass horn 1905; a Red Gem and a Coinslot Standard of 1899. Besides these Edison machines we saw and heard a Pathe type Reversible of 1903; a 1902 Puck and a 1904 Columbia Jewel. With the exception of the Puck all of these machines performed admirably, the Edisons taking the lead.

Disc machines covered a wide range from an 1898 Trademark Model to a 1934 H.M.V. portable. In between we heard a handsome Pathephone with a large polished brass horn playing some centre-start records; a Zonophone Cinch of 1912 and an H.M.V. Monarch of the same year with an oak horn which gave a very satisfying sound. A Junior Monarch of 1903 played a record called "What is the use of loving a girl" with sufficient spirit to inspire some of the members to join in the chorus. A H.M.V. pleated diaphragm and 103 table Model were also heard.

Three 'miniature' machines were demonstrated; a Peter Pan Portable 1927; a Thorens Excelda 1928 and a Mikkiphone of 1926. Though not very loud the Mikkiphone gave the best performance in this group.

In the second half of the programme Dave sprung a surprise on us. The Standard and Triumph machines were set going together and performed "The Trumpeter" (sung by Peter Dawson) in synchronisation. This made a marvellous sound and drew forth spontaneous applause.

As if all of the foregoing were not enough, we were treated to liquid and solid refreshments both before the recital and during the interval. We would like to convey through Dave our grateful thanks to whoever helped in this department.

We were very pleased to welcome members and their wives from Australia and Switzerland, along with some London members who had not been able to attend for some time.

All present agreed that it was a thoroughly enjoyable evening and we are all most grateful to Dave for all the work he must have put into making it a success - which it certainly was. Getting all those machines up from Surrey and back again without any visible means of transport was a feat in itself!

London Correspondent

## Laughter in Court

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Sometime ago I was fortunate enough to acquire a collection of 7½" Odeon records. Only two of the original paper covers survived, but the original owner had carefully cut out discs of newspaper, 7½" in diameter and placed them between the records as an elementary form of protection.

I fell to reading these paper discs recently and discovered that they were cut from newspapers of 1905 and 1906 vintage. Near the bottom of the box I came across the disc which is reproduced here. Please read the centre column and I guarantee you will be amused!

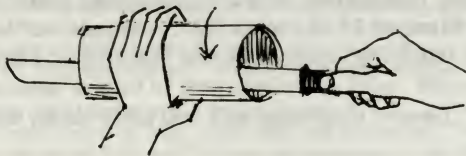
One wonders how the Plaintiff and his wife would react to present day popmusic in its maddening ubiquity.

John McKeown

## Shaving Blue Amberols Internally

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The expansion of the plaster filling of Blue Amberols often prevents the cylinders from being played or perhaps cutting short the recording. Complicated reamers and abrasive paper on conical forms have been suggested as a remedy, but what is required is a simple shaving device readily available to everyone. Try using a carving knife which should be found in every household. This knife should have a straight edge and back and be fairly sharp. It is held flat firmly at the bottom inside of the cylinder, and with the other hand the cylinder is gently but firmly rotated against the knife edge. With care this removes the plaster uniformly, and the cylinder should be tried on the mandrel and the process repeated until the required result is obtained.



Ken Champion



...entle that has ever produced such

(Laughter.)  
Mr. Justice Jelf: It has a biggish-sized mouth.  
Mr. Williams: "If 'twere done, 'twere well 'twere done quickly." (Laughter.)

Mr. Justice Jelf: Just let's have the tune, "I am marching home." (Laughter.)

Mr. Williams: Something with a good chorus. (Laughter.)

The machine was then set going, and it reproduced a tenor song by Caruso, "Don Pasquale," in "Pagliacci."

A juryman inquired whether a soft or loud needle was being used.

Mr. Williams: They say a soft one.

Mr. Justice Jelf: Will you stop that now? We have had enough of that tune. Is that the loudest you can do, Mr. McCall? (Laughter.)

Mr. McCall: Yes, that is one of the loudest. I am going to give my friend all the tunes.

Mr. Williams: Let's have a loud one—"Bedelia."

Mr. Justice Jelf: Yes, put a hard needle in.

Another louder tune, a brass band rendering of "Bedelia," was then played, and all in court, including the judge, laughed heartily.

Mr. Justice Jelf: Now let us have it played outside.

Mr. Williams: Will your lordship survive?

Mr. Justice Jelf: It may be better outside. (Laughter.)

Mr. Williams: The conditions here are not the same at all as in a house.

The gramophone was then removed to the corridor, and the sound seemed to be intensified, although the doors were shut. The occupants of the adjoining courts must have wondered what had happened.

Mrs. Mary Eliza Butt, wife of the plaintiff, said she was married on Dec. 6, 1904.

The witness was asked to speak louder.

Mr. Williams: Try to imitate the gramophone. (Laughter.)

Witness corroborated as to the alleged noise, and said that comic operas were played on Sundays. The constant repetition of tunes was very irritating, and it made her ill. She thought there was dancing on the table sometimes. (Laughter.)

In cross-examination witness gave an example of the noise she considered emanated from a feghorn, which evoked much laughter.

Miss Dorothy Rumbold, of St. Albans, a sister of the last witness, gave corroborative evidence.

Dr. F. E. Haydon said he attended the plaintiff, who was not a highly nervous person.

Ada Waken, cook, and Alice Maynard, housemaid, in the service of the plaintiff, corroborated as to the gramophone nuisance.

On the conclusion of the plaintiff's case, the judge suggested a settlement, and after much consultation between counsel and clients an arrangement seemed possible, the only difficulty in the way being the question of costs, upon which the plaintiff was firm. His lordship eventually invited counsel into his private room, and a settlement was soon effected. The record was withdrawn, the defendant giving an undertaking in the terms agreed upon, and pay the plaintiff a certain amount of costs fixed by the judge.

Mr. Justice LAWRENCE and a Special Jury.

IN THE STREET

dence conducted.  
Cross-examination asked her to forgive her father. He gaged the matter, and William Deakin, son, uncle of the co-respondent, saw him and asked him to see if he would say he had been with her, he would pay him well for it.  
The hearing was adjourned.

## DUBLIN MARRIAGE

The final stage of the Coleman matter entered upon in Dublin yesterday by Madden and a jury, when the respondent Byrne Coleman, was examined, and the charges made against him by his

Dr. Coleman declared that during days' honeymoon no incident except interfere with their happiness. On July 12—they were married on J Brussels, his wife announced that from Miss Moloney saying that she had into Dr. Coleman's house, and he had "She would order nothing into

wife said no more until they were together when she said, "We must part." He again "We must part." There was of foundation in the statement that his wife in private during the honeymoon the day on which they returned when Mrs. Coleman had coffee and

room, table d'hôte breakfast, a half midday, luncheon at the railway restaurant on the Dover and Ostend branch and stout and sandwiches in London the honeymoon. After their return insisted that her friends should come as often as she wished, and he saw any reasonable number of visits.

participle of truth in anything his wife to the honeymoon. He used no violence towards her, and the statement that she left his house in July she was going away for ever. You are a honour." Beyond the fact that his mother and sister to did nothing to offend her.

was effected by the Jesuit Father turned in October, and returned June 8 last. During that time, he, and then things went about two months.

slept in different breakfast at lunch at night.

at night.

at night.

at night.

# The Body and Soul of the Gramophone

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*(CASE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE CLOCKWORK ACOUSTIC.)*

## **PART 3 - The Mystery of the Cracked Soundbox.**

It was only a cheap effort costing one guinea (21 shillings or 105p) in those days, but I was nonetheless happy and proud to actually own a gramophone - a *real* one. So much did I enjoy listening to the music coming off the discs that, with my head in the clouds, I was soon to learn the hard way that I was expecting far too much for my 105p, and knowing next to nothing about gramophones, I found myself embarked on a wild goose chase after the perfect gramophone when in reality, the perfect gramophone or perfect anything-else does not exist; for there is no such thing as absolute perfection. Had my gramophone been absolutely perfect, there would have been no reason to tempt me into the quest for better reproduction and I would never have learned anything about it - it would just go - "perfect" - full stop.

Amongst my first few very early discs, was a recording by the then famous boy soprano, Ernest Lough singing "Hear, ye, Israel," and the crystal clear purity of his voice was out of this world, but unfortunately some of his louder top notes were accompanied by a nasty jarring sound resembling that of a cracked cup. I found the same sort of thing happening to a greater extent on orchestral records which I later acquired - any loud or high pitched passages did not come out clearly. There was a "reediness" about them, and nasty scratches began to appear on the records where such passages occurred. To have the beauty of the music spoiled in this way really got on my nerves, and to see my prized expensive records, hard to come by, being progressively ruined with every playing gave me a right headache, so I just *had* to find out what was the cause of all this.

The rattle obviously came from some part of the soundbox and/or from the needle point which should ride smoothly along the groove in the record. If it did not, it would be certain to tear up the sound track by jumping from side to side with each modulation, and would indicate that the soundbox was out of adjustment and not operating properly. If the rattle came from the soundbox, something must be loose and if so, what part? The only way to find out was to take the thing to pieces to see how it was made up and take a chance as to whether I could get it together again. So I did just that and was amazed to find what a simple piece of mechanism it was - just a circular piece of thin corrugated metal like the foil off the top of a paste pot, attached to a lever supported between two pivots and clamped between two rubler rings like those found on paste pots. Although there was not much to it, there seemed to be a number of things that could cause rattle - loose at the pivots? Gasket not tight enough? Or was the screw or nut a bit slack where it fastened the diaphragm onto the stylus? It was fiddling enough to adjust the pivots on which the stylus was mounted, but the nut securing the diaphragm to the stylus was so microscopic as to be almost impossible to handle. However, I got the hang of it and screwed everything up tight so that there could not possibly be any rattle; and then wondered why it sounded worse than ever - records getting ripped to pieces and going down the drain faster still. Of course, the stylus was so stiff that it could not respond to the modulations in the groove.

This put me onto the discovery that the life of a record depends upon the accuracy with



which the needle point follows the modulations of the sound track without jumping about or "chattering" in the groove. Many times I had to take that wretched soundbox to bits trying to get the right adjustment until I found that tracking accuracy also depended upon the degree of compliance offered by the diaphragm, *and* until the fine thread in the tiny nut securing the diaphragm stripped off; the nut fell off and disappeared into the carpet and it was never seen again. So I now had no soundbox and gramophone kaputt.

With my soundbox out of action and insufficient pocket money to afford another, I felt lost without a gramophone and rather than take that lying down, I debated possible ways and means of rigging the soundbox so that I could at least get some sort of reproduction from it. The diaphragm by now was too badly messed about to be of much use and glue was too unreliable to stand up to the intensity of the sound vibrations. All I had left of it was the frame and the resolve to make a diaphragm out of something and fix it somehow to the end of the stylus. Thought I'd try cutting one out from a piece of fairly thin cardboard, putting a small hole in the centre and pushing the end of the stylus through the hole, finally securing the join with a seal of candle wax and then seeing what happened. Accordingly, with careful manipulation I adjusted the pivots and the locking nuts so that the stylus could turn as freely as possible upon its pivots without there being any side-play whatever. Having done this, it was easy to put the cardboard diaphragm in place, replace the back of the soundbox and put a seal of wax round the end of the stylus where it pierced the diaphragm. It worked! The results were surprisingly good and for a long time, I made do with the cardboard. This set-up made it easy to experiment with dozens of cardboard diaphragms cut out of different thicknesses of card in various qualities. In this way I could find the particular thickness and quality of card that gave the maximum tonal range. Too thick and, although the treble response was O.K., the card did not give enough to respond to the bass. Too thin, and though the bass was reasonably good, the top notes tended to be muffled and lacked definition. Very thin, and then it was only the centre of the diaphragm that responded to the vibrations, thus producing a very weak, thin tone. Also, if the diaphragm was too thick, it did not give enough to allow the stylus to respond to the greater amplitudes and heavy bass occurring in loud orchestral passages. This resulted in the needle either jumping the groove or chattering against the groove walls and severely damaging the track. If the diaphragm was too thin or slack; the stylus would be allowed to swing too far so that the point of the needle would overshoot the bends in the sound track, thus causing similar damage. Thus, it was evident that to obtain the all important tracking accuracy and maximum range of frequency response, the diaphragm must have a certain optimum degree of resilience and elasticity. At a later date, I experimented with mica diaphragms and found exactly the same requirements held good; and similar results followed the use of mica diaphragms that were either too thick or thin. Generally speaking, if certain notes on a record are accentuated out of proportion it indicates overshooting and that the diaphragm is either too slack; or that its resilience is incorrect for certain frequencies; or that the diaphragm itself resonates at certain frequencies, causing overshooting and track damage.

The soundbox originally supplied with my "Guiniphone" was of course only a cheap job called a "Puratone" which was quite good for the price, but as my ears got jarred by the slightest fault in performance, I was ever trying to go on better. After so much experimentation entailing constant doing and undoing, I busted it altogether - the threads of the three screws on the back had gone so that the back wouldn't stay on. The result was that I had to fork out 3/6 (17p) for a new "Puratone" which eventually suffered the same fate. Soon after purchasing

this second soundbox, the gramophone jumped suddenly and uttered a loud bang as the mainspring packed up and silenced it completely. Knowing nothing about springs, the machine had to go into a shop for repairs aided by a parental subsidy. After a trying wait and having parted with something over £1, I got my gramophone back and resolved that next time I would buy a spring for a few shillings and do the job myself. The experiments went on, but despite trying all sorts of adjustments and even new metal diaphragms which then cost about 7p each, I could never completely eliminate some kind of chatter (mostly from the surface of the disc), and concluded that so long as I kept using a cheap gramophone, the records would go on being ruined wholesale as I had a habit of collecting heavy orchestral stuff which my machine could not take, for the bass passages were powerful enough to throw the light tone-arm bodily though they could not be heard because there was no horn.

At this time a member of the tennis club to which I belonged used to bring along his H.M.V. portable gramophone to entertain us between games. It had an H.M.V. "No. 4" soundbox which was bigger than mine and had a mica diaphragm. The tone was terrific - beautifully sharp and clear, a realistic full bodied bass and **no** chatter. At my request my colleague very kindly lent me his H.M.V. portable on which to try out my classical records whose reproduction was completely transformed on this machine. I noticed that the horn had a long tapering stem, which was built right round the inside of the gramophone case before it joined the base of the tone arm, which accounted for the fine bass reproduction. On my "Guiniphone" the short tone arm opened straight out into a little recess in the top of the casing. So, as soon as I got a job, it was to be an H.M.V. gramophone for me and none other. Incidentally no other portable gramophone I have ever heard before or since that time has come anywhere near the H.M.V. model with the "No. 4" soundbox.

I thought of buying an H.M.V. "No. 4" for my "Guiniphone" to see if that would cure the rattle problem, but H.M.V. soundboxes cost 30/- (£1.50p) each which I could not afford. I realise now that it would not have made much difference as no soundbox however good could reproduce fully without a proper horn. On an H.M.V. table grand I now have, I have found that, because of its more substantial horn, the size of the soundbox makes little difference. I have never found out why, but have to accept that a long and well designed horn will draw first class performance from any soundbox provided there is no chatter.

To get back to the old days; after the second "Puratone" soundbox had become defunct with experiments, my aunt bought me a mica soundbox - one whose stylus is mounted against knife-edged fulcrums and held in place by a coiled spring under the head of a screw on either side of the needle end of the stylus. The screws pass through the springs into the housing base. The diaphragm is let into the front of the box and the gasket tucked in round.

In course of time I managed to acquire two other soundboxes, one a mica type like the last one, and the other a metal type with a pivot mounted stylus. With this one, the diaphragm was let into the front of the box and a metal ring was screwed down over the top gasket. This box lent itself to a number of experiments with a mica diaphragm I bought for 3/6 and an old trimmed down Columbia diaphragm mounted on a thin cardboard flange. In the other smaller box, for the mica, I substituted a disc cut from the thin aluminium top of a cosmetic jar. It worked as well as the mica. All these experiments produced varying and interesting degrees of success, but I had to realise how very difficult it was to obtain a tracking efficiency entirely free from surface chatter. There was much to learn yet, for tracking depends on the design of



the soundbox and upon a lot of other technical factors involved, and a correct balancing relationship between all these factors is necessary; you can't get this balance with cheap boxes.

With constant use both for listening and experiment, I inevitably broke another spring. This time, I carefully dismantled the motor to extract the spring drum, and having got the lid off and partially pulled out the centre coils of the spring, I realised how powerful and dangerous these springs can be if not handled properly. It threatened to fly out like a souped-up Jack-in-the-Box, but I managed to catch it in time and wind it back. Taking the spring outside and placing a wooden box over it, I gave it a tug with a pair of pliers. It all but smashed the box and afterwards, the metal slotted collar that secured the centre end of the spring to the winding spindle had disappeared. This piece of metal was eventually found half way down the lawn. Sheer luck, or it would have seen the last of the gramophone. This spring was found to be  $9\frac{1}{2}$  feet long,  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch wide, and it had an eye or key-hole in its outer end which fitted over a stud on the inside of the drum, and at the inner end was another eye to engage a hook in the collar that in turn slotted onto the winding spindle. Having bought a new spring for a few shillings, I found after several attempts, a way to man-handle it and wind it into the drum. Great care was needed not to let it slip while winding or it could do a lot of damage and inflict serious injury if any part of one's anatomy came within range. A friend of mine once told me that while renewing a spring in his gramophone, the drum slipped from his grasp and catapulted into the ceiling bringing down half the ceiling! This was my first lesson in putting a new spring into a gramophone, and am happy to say that since then, I have repaired many gramophones without mishap. When extracting a spring one first eases out the centre coil enough to get one's fingers over the edge of the drum and the main part of the spring. Grasp firmly and slowly slide the drum round, allowing the spring to rise after passing beneath the fingers. Reverse the motion when re-winding after having first properly secured the eye hole round the stud inside the drum.

Springs vary in length from  $9\frac{1}{2}$  ft. to  $15\frac{1}{2}$  ft. according to the size of the drum. For any given drum, a certain length gives maximum playing time. Too long a spring leaves insufficient space for expansion and shortens the playing time. In width they vary from  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch to  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch. Some springs have a hub centre where in place of an eye, the spring is moulded to fit a groove in the winding spindle.

My next article goes into close detail of various types of soundbox construction; about gaskets and conclusions from observations of further experiments with diaphragms; using an H.M.V. portable.

E.J. Goodall

## Labelling Cylinders

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There must be other members who like me have cylinders without cartons, or cartons without lids. This makes the search for a particular cylinder very tedious. Have you tried making a complete carton or even just a lid? I do not recommend it for apart from time consuming the result is usually unsatisfactory. I have come up with a simple method for identifying cylinders. First cut out from cardboard - preferably white card but throwaway boxes from the supermarket will do - discs  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " in diameter. Write on the discs the details from the cylinders, with additional information if available, and set aside for the ink to dry. I use a black fibre-point for clear reading. Obtain a sheet of plastic foam approximately 1" thick (Woolworth's sell this) and cut into strips  $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide and then into pieces  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " long. These are then fixed to the centre of the back of the discs with a suitable adhesive (I use Boscotex), and when dry are pushed into the tops of the cylinders where they remain securely in place. Different coloured discs can be used for quick sorting into categories of music hall, opera, etc. The job is quickly done and the cost negligible.

Ken Champion



*Only the land of Wagner could have produced this massive brass horn, probably about 1910. Horns of this type were apparently still being imported and offered for sale by Murdoch's in the late 1920's, but it is doubtful if they enjoyed wide sales here.*

*Photos Courtesy of Christies.*



*Horn gramophone made by  
Barnett Samuel in 1928, with a  
transfer on the side bearing the  
name 'Wessex Gramophones  
M.S. Ltd.'*



*'Ragtime Rastus' and 'The  
Boxers', produced by the  
National Toy Co. of Boston,  
Mass., circa 1920.*

# The Recordings of 1907 in Britain

PART 2 BY FRANK ANDREWS

I intimated in my opening article on this subject that I would, in my next instalment, mention those artists of 1907 whose recordings should find inclusion in "Bauer's Historical Records, 1898 to 1908/9. The New Catalogue", so this I will now proceed to do, restricting myself to those artists whose records were released or re-advertised during 1907 only. The names are given in alphabetical order, so here goes.

The first candidate is Werner Alberti, tenor, whose Homophone and Imperial Records are not mentioned, he is the only artist with initial "A". In the "B"s there was Rudolph Berger, baritone, and Romeo Berti, tenor, both on Homophone which are not mentioned. August Bockmann, tenor, on Imperial, (which will be from Favorite) has no entries, and Oscar Braun, tenor, on Homophone and Lyrophon needs inclusion.

There are no artists with names beginning with "C" but, among the "D"s, there were Beka and Imperial recordings of Marcelle Demougeot, soprano, the Imperial being a pressing of the Favorite Record mentioned. Marie Dietrich, soprano, on Homophones, and Gaston Dubois, tenor, on the same label should be included.

We pass over "E" and "F" and come to the solitary "G" in Signor M. Gros, a baritone on Favorite Records with operatic arias sung in Italian.

Alexander Haydter, bass, was on Imperial Records in 1907, derived from Favorite Records, only one of which (Favorite) is mentioned in "Bauer". Percy Hemus, the baritone, was on Imperial, but whether he was "worthy" for inclusion in "Bauer" is not a matter for my judgment. If Fray Heymann-Engel, soprano, is the same artist as Sophie Heymann, soprano, credited with two Berliner discs, then her duet with Juan Luria on Imperial Record (from Favorite matrix) should be included. Should these sopranos not be one and the same person, then a new artist's entry is needed.

No artists with "I", "J" or "K" as initials to their surnames.

Juan Luria, baritone, was on Imperial Records in 1907 and only one of the Favorite Records from which they derived is itemised.

Another possible duplication of names is Mlle. Laute, soprano, on Beka Meister, and Antionette Laute-Brun, soprano, included in "Bauer". If these names cover the same artist then the Beka record should be entered under Laute-Brun. Madame Margharita Lux, soprano on Homophone, should be a new entry.

Madame Magali, contralto, Georg Maikl, tenor, Edoardo Migliaccio, singer?, and Lucia Muratore, tenor, were all on Imperial, and except for Migliaccio, their recordings were from Favorite masters.

Carl Nebe, bass, is not credited with any Homophone Records in "Bauer" Juan Spiwack, tenor of the Royal Opera and Imperial Concerts, Berlin, was on Homophone Records and so was Leo Stormont, credited with G&T and Columbia discs only. He was also on Sovereign Records in 1907.

Constantino Thos was on Neophone, System Michaelis Disc Phonograph Records. In my previous article I mentioned this artist as a baritone, but gave his name as Thomas Constantino, asking for information about him! Even as Thos, I still cannot find him mentioned in Girard and Barnes - he had at least ten operatic arias sung in Italian.

Alan Turner, baritone, on Odeon and Zonophone in 1907, may have been excluded from the pages of "Bauer" on account of the content of the repertoire on those labels and the same may be true of Louis Van Hes's recordings on Favorite, who sang as a tenor.

This concludes my "Not in Bauer" section, but one other artist, Alfred Heather, tenor,



included in Girard & Barnes "Vertical Cut Cylinders & Discs" under Pathe centre-start discs of 1906, (the first issues of any Pathe Discs were in December 1906!!) should also include his Neophone recordings.

Since my last article I have been informed that Dalton Baker, "Britain's Greatest Baritone", as he was advertised by Odeon Records, was indeed a well-known concert baritone in his own right and was not George Baker under a pseudonym. The use of George Baker's name over Dalton Baker's repertoire in the 1920 Odeon catalogue, printed in Germany, will have to be looked into further.

### THE STRING PLAYERS OF 1907.

I am not including the banjoists in this section, limiting myself to the violin, the viola, the violoncello, the harp and the pianoforte.

Taking the violinists first and in alphabetical order of names, those "scraping for a living" in 1907 were:- Monsieur Bachmann, Paris; on Favorite Records, Walter Biederman on both Columbia and the Star records of Hawthorne and Sheble, which, in this instance were from Columbia matrices. Another violinist on Columbia was Charles D'Almaine, Spencer Dyke was on Odeon, Harold Eisenberg on Imperial, and Mischa Elman on G. & T.

A. Stroud Haxton was on Sterling cylinder records and it was claimed that he was the first to record with the Stroh type violin, which, like the Sterling Record, was in manufacture at the Russell Hunting Record Co., Ltd.'s works at Cambridge Heath, London.

J. Kocian was on Columbia and Monsieur Lederer on Favorite, and the female violiniste, Alice Liebman, was on Odeon, with Kubelik on the sister Fonotipias.

On Pathe Discs were Professor Mai and M.E. Mendels, and Kappelmeister W. Neuman had to resin his bow to make records for Lyrophon. On Edison Bell cylinders was to be had Victor Opferman, who was later to make many recordings as a member of an instrumental quartette which recorded under various names.

Professor Ranzato, musical director for Pathe in their Milan studios, was on Pathe discs, and another "Hillandale" recordist was Scott Skinner who recorded in both cuts for Sterling and Odeon records and another "Hillandale" wizard of the catgut was Sydney Smith on Neophone records.

Another Columbia artist was George Stehl, and H. Lyell Taylor was on the White two-minute wax cylinders.

Imperial Records had a second violinist in Fritz Voelker, and another feminine exponent of the fiddle was Vera Warwick-Evans on Neophone.

J. Weintraub on Beka and Louis Wolff on Favorite brings me to the end of the violinists.

As I have failed to discover any recordings of the viola having entered any of the catalogues of 1907, I shall pass immediately to the 'cellists and the first name on my list is that of Monsieur Berthelien on Odeon, followed by Arnold Foldessy on Edison Bell cylinders and Sovereign and Zonophone discs. On Edison cylinders was Hans Kronold and Odeon Records had a second 'cellist in Marix Loevensohn, while Favorite records offered Josef Malkin as an accompanist to Juan Luria, the tenor, and as a solo artist.

On the White cylinders of the General Phonograph Company was Jacques Renard, or another choice of artist was Victor Sorlin on Columbia discs and the derivative Star Records from Hawthorne & Sheble.

The last three 'cellists on my list are Mr. Fr. Trobaeck of Stockholm on the Favorite Record, August van Biene on G. & T. and A. Warwick-Evans on Neophone.

Only two harpists have I discovered, Charles Schuetze on Edison cylinders and a Mr. Surth on Columbia discs. Can anybody please furnish me with Mr. Surth's first name, or names?

## THE PIANISTS.

The sound of the pianoforte was never recorded by the acoustic method with any great degree of fidelity, but the companies persisted in their attempts to present the instrument with as much naturalness of tone as was possible, until the advent of electrical recording at last gave pianists and the piano itself the opportunity to present the vast repertoire of pianoforte music with the sounds and tonal properties which the composers intended.

Taking the year 1907, it is my opinion that the choice of pianists on recordings was somewhat wider than the state of the art of recording piano tone would lead one to expect.

The first name I have is Joseph Batten, well-known in later years as Musical Director for J.E. Hough, Limited's "Edison Bell" discs of various labels, and his subsequent appointment to Columbia Records in a similar capacity. Many of you will have the account of his life within the recording industry which he published as "Joe Batten's Book - The Story of Sound Recording". In 1907, as I mentioned in my previous article, he was on Neophone records as a soloist, although most of his work was as an accompanist. Two other pianists whose names began with "B" were G.J. Bezemer of Rotterdam, on Favorite and Harold Brooke on Russell Indestructible cylinders.

Neophone had another pianist in A.F. Dubbins but his fame has not equalled that of Vladimir De Pachmann, on G. & T., who carried on running commentaries through his superb music making! Heinrich Grunfeld was also a G. & T. artist, and Favorite had another pianist beginning with "G", Eduard Goll of Stockholm.

Professor Viggo Kihl was on Russell Indestructible Cylinders. Was there really such an artist, or was the name a pseudonym for somebody like Henry E. Geehl?

The piano duo of Herr & Frau Ree, on Favorite, I mentioned last time, and so I pass on to Miclos Roger, her Fonotopia recordings being sold by the Sterling & Hunting Ltd. company in 1907.

Another "Professor" was F.S. Smith, pianist on Sovereign Records and a third artist from the ranks of the fairer sex was Miss Stanislaw Szubert, of Berlin, on Favorite, and this label provides the last pianist on my list for 1907 in the person of A.B.H. Verhey, of Rotterdam.

## THE WOODWIND PLAYERS OF 1907.

I shall begin with the bagpipes, not generally accepted as a woodwind instrument, and by some people, sad to say, not reckoned a musical instrument at all!

Well, no matter what one's opinion of the bagpipes may be, the recording companies saw in the instrument a likely source of profitable returns if they were recorded and so the following were committed to wax and sold in 1907.

You will not be surprised to see the "King's Piper" mentioned, as Pipe-major H. Forsyth was to be had on Edison Bell cylinders and Odeon and Sovereign records. Pathe Discs went one better and recorded, or sold previously recorded, bagpipes duets played by Pipe-majors Macrae and Macpherson, but Russell Indestructible Cylinders stuck to the usual soloist in Sergeant R. Taylor and although G. & T. Ltd. did likewise with a Zonophone Record they kept the name of the exponent of the instrument a closely guarded secret!

The piccolo recorded extremely well, and as it is an instrument which lends itself to a show of dexterity and exhibitionism, it was ideal for demonstrating talking machines. Its bigger brother, the flute, was used more musically.

Russell Indestructible Cylinders had George Ackroyd on piccolo and Mr. De Jong was a flautist on G. & T. Albert Fransella, celebrated also as an obbligato accompanist, and who only had one useable lung, has the distinction, so I am told, of being one of the solo artists appearing at the first of the Henry Wood Promenade Concerts which took place in the Queen's Hall, London. In 1907 he was available under the G. & T. and Neophone labels.

H.D. Nisbet was another flautist and he at one time was the Musical Director for Neophone,



and even participated in actually committing artists to wax as a recording engineer. He made the musical arrangements for some of the band recordings, which he conducted. He later conducted for Gramavox band records. Obviously he was to be found on the Neophone label in 1907.

Marshall P. Lufsky, the American piccolo and flute player, was to be heard on new recordings issued by Columbia, with G. & T., Ltd. offering additional competition with Emil Prill, flautist.

Eric Hoegberg of Stockholm, on Favorite, Eli Hudson on Odeon and Sterling cylinders, Winnie Hudson on Sterling and Monsieur Jacquemont of La Garde Reublicaine on Imperial, were more flautists, with Eli Hudson also on piccolo. J. Willcocke, piccolo, and H. Wilson, flute were both on Sovereign Records and my last artist, Ben Walker, on Zonophone, who was really Eli Hudson, played piccolo. I see I have omitted Monsieur Andre, piccolo, of Garde Reublicaine on Odeon.

The clarinet too, did not take too badly to the acoustic method of recording, and a number of clarionettists had their palms crossed with gold coin in reward for their efforts in front of the recording horns.

Charles Draper, of the well-known Draper family, was on Edison Bell cylinders, Mr. T. Hughes was on Neophone, and Mr. O. Johansson, of Stockholm, was on Favorite, which company also had Monsieur Lefevre, clarionettist of the Grand Opera in Paris.

Alex Smith, on Sovereign Records and A. Taylor on Beka Grand Records complete this clutch of 1907's clarionettists.

Reading through my previous article, in preparation for this present one, I have discovered a number of omissions, especially in my "Wind in the Reeds" section. The following artists should have received mention:- J. Astley, playing concertina on Edison Bell cylinders, and Steve Bartel on Zonophone on a similar instrument, and Frank Cooper, who was also an Edison Bell artist was a melodeon player. Another Edison Bell artist was E. Clements, a siffleur, and Walter Churcher was one of those who actually "talked" into the horn for the Gramophone & Type-writer, Ltd.

There was a mixed bag of "Anonymous Artists" in 1907. Homophone had a clarionettist, and un-named piccolo players were to be had from Beka, Odeon, Favorite, Homophone, Lyrophon, and, in pairs, from Columbia and Favorite.

Homophone had a mystery German violinist and Beka were unable to, (or they preferred not to) divulge who were their artists recorded as a violin and flute duo.

One label of 1907, the Elephone Record, appears to have left no written evidence of what in its repertoire, and the exceedingly small amount of disc information that I have is pitiful. Can anyone submit titles and artists, matrix and catalogue numbers, and any other relevant information which they can find on any of the copies they may have of this extremely rare make of record?

The only artists I know of on this label, classified as "not in Buair" are the French operatic singers Aumonier, Mary Boyer, Milhau and Mlle. Dalmee on Elephone Record No. 194. With matrix numbers 174F and 157F I am led to suspect that the origin of the two sides lies with Lyrophon matrices - but this is only a suspicion. I am grateful to Dave Mason, collector, for this Elephone information. I believe I have also seen a Belhomme recording on Elephone. The only other artists known to me under this label are James Godden, Nellie Beare, soprano, Beatrice Jeffries, soprano, and the Universal Band. It has been impossible, so far, to date the Elephone Records known but as the records could only have been sold during 1907 and 1908, the time factor is restricted enough not to cause much of a problem in this area.

In all the above comments I have completely ignored the fact that the artists described may well have been issued under pseudonyms, except in those instances which came readily to mind. The problem of discovering the identities of the many artists who had recordings issued under their own, or the companies' pseudonyms remains an issue which still needs to be tackled in a methodical manner.

# Sound Reproduction: the First Hundred Years

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## PART 1 BY IAN COSENS

1977 sees the centenary of the Talking Machine, the first practical reproducer of recorded sound. A good many years previous to 1877, "recordings" had been made, using a vibrating hog's bristle to mark a wavy trace on a sheet of glass coated with lampblack. This was just a scientific curiosity used to illustrate that sound was a form of vibration, and no thought seems to have been given to the possibility of any form of reproduction. A development of this idea was Leon Scott's Phonautograph of 1857 which used a cylinder coated with lampblack. Though still not replayable, it presaged Edison's invention of twenty years later. Thus it is strictly not accurate to describe 1977 as the centenary of sound *recording*, only that of reproduction.

In 1877, two quite independent workers hit on similar ideas. The first (probably) was a Frenchman, Charles Cros, who that April deposited a paper describing his ideas with the Academy of Sciences in Paris. He made no attempt to build such a machine, and neither it seems did anyone else use his design.

In July or August of that same year, one of the most practical inventors in the history of the world, the American Thomas Alva Edison, independently had a very similar idea which he promptly put into practice by having his mechanic Kreusi build a machine to a simple working sketch. (It has been commented elsewhere that Edison's many sketches bear a curious resemblance to those of Leonardo da Vinci!) That first machine worked straight off, and a replica of it may now be seen in the Science Museum.

Edison wrapped a sheet of tinfoil, the recording medium, round a cylindrical mandrel whose surface carried a spiral groove. The recording head - which was to do double duty as a reproducer was placed in position so that the "stylus" indented the tinfoil as it passed along the grooves, itself being set in vibration by a diaphragm against which Edison's voice impinged via a short horn. As he turned the handle working the mandrel, Edison spoke the words of "Mary had a little Lamb" into the mouthpiece. Winding the machine back to the starting position, he again let the stylus follow the now indented groove. He afterwards said that nobody was more surprised than he when the machine recited the words back at him!

Inevitably, after a few playings the patterns in the tinfoil rubbed out, but as Edison's initial thoughts were for a dictating machine this hardly mattered. Details were soon published in the various scientific and engineering journals around the world, and many were the examples of privately-built machines made to Edison's design, with variations. Some of these are wonderful examples of fastidious craftsmanship, and still survive in museums and private collections.

Within a year, Edison had placed this work to one side as he devoted his energies to a new enthusiasm, electric light. Arc lamps already existed, but the idea of a hot filament glowing brightly in a glass envelope promised a device of great domestic utility and modest power consumption. As before Edison succeeded, and the basis of his designs continues in the ordinary lamp bulbs we use today. He also made enormous contributions to the development of suitable generating and distributing equipment. In the result, about a decade was to pass before he could



return to his "favourite toy" the phonograph, and in the meantime other engineers and inventors had come on the scene, with their now valuable contributions to make.

The first of these, and with the most pressing claims, were Chichester Bell (brother of Alexander of telephone fame) and Charles Sumner Tainter. These two made the fundamental contribution to the growing technology of the phonograph of using a wax or wax-coated cylinder, and cutting the groove instead of indenting it. This gave better volume, a wider frequency range of sound and a more permanent record. At first Edison resented this intrusion into his domain, but ultimately patents were pooled. Commercial production began of two rival cylinder machines : the Edison Phonograph and the Columbia Graphophone. To this day, record labels sometimes carry the full title of the Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd. In the USA, the word 'phonograph' was to be adopted as the generic term for all talking machines, whereas in this country we reserve it for cylinder machines only.

In 1888, another worker Emile Berliner, a German living in Washington, made the first disc machine, which he called a 'gramophone'. His resources being limited, the machine was extremely primitive by Edison's standards, but it was practical. A disc did not and does not have the constant groove speed of the cylinder - a major defect in Edison's eyes - but it was more convenient to handle and store. Above all, it was easy to duplicate; the cylinder was not. Commercial quantities could be produced cheaply and quickly.

During the next decade, the gramophone (now so spelt except in German) was to develop slowly and steadily. Meantime the phonograph was entering its golden era with sales of countless thousands of machines and records, giving hardly a thought to its crude competitor. In 1898, the hand drive of the gramophone gave way to a reliable clockwork motor : Berliner's "Improved Gramophone" became popular, and is still known as the basis for the world's most famous trade mark. One word about this machine : it is not so large as the picture may suggest, the turntable being only seven inches in diameter, the largest size of record then produced. 1901 saw the first ten-inch discs, and 1903 the first twelve-inch. Playing speeds in those early years were far from standard, a range from the lower sixties to the upper eighties in rpm being common. Most early records however play below 78 rpm. Speeds were not quoted, and the user had to adjust by ear to the sound that seemed right to him!


The early years of the twentieth century saw the gramophone establish itself commercially in a way that its cylinder competitors had failed to do. Thanks principally to the enterprise of its first recording manager, Fred Gaisberg, the Gramophone Company secured the services of numbers of internationally known musicians of the highest rank : Caruso, Chaliapin, Kreisler, Kubelik, Melba, Patti, Sarasate and so many others. The prestige and publicity value of these names can hardly be doubted, but to this must be added the records' *commercial* success. The operatic celebrities in particular were accorded special labels and sold at very high prices, still in sufficient numbers to show handsome profits for both the Company and the artists concerned. It is said that Caruso in his lifetime earned recording royalties of over a million pounds.

Melba's 1904 records were first issued at 21/- each, and at that time this represented more than a week's wages for many people. Yet there were enough customers, and original copies of the records are by no means uncommon today, together with their special sleeves with photographs of the artist pasted on.

Caruso's solos were not priced as highly as Melba's, but his ensemble records were subject to a rising scale of charges, culminating in the all-star Sextet from Lucia di Lammermoor. One of his three published versions, playing for four minutes (single-sided) cost 30/- in 1914. The

regularity with which most of Caruso's records turn up today speaks for itself, and has the curious effect of making some of his artistically most valuable records quite cheap to acquire. One thing may be considered certain : Caruso is likely to remain the most famous singer in history, none can dislodge him from his lonely pinnacle, and the gramophone it was that helped him to that position. Without records, who could visualise that unique sound just from written descriptions? In the words of an American critic, Caruso records in some form or other will be played as long as our civilisation lasts, and only this year a new LP has been produced using the most elaborate processing techniques yet devised for old recordings.

Single-sided records were the norm in the early days of the gramophone, and it has to be said that the idea of "one piece, one record" has something to commend it when building a library, even today. On the other hand, the cost of producing a double-sided record is only marginally higher than that for a single, so inevitably this had to become the standard format. Certainly a large library of single-sided discs would be space-consuming, though still hardly the problem one has with cylinders. By 1910, most records with the exception of some celebrity discs were issued double-sided. The HMV and Columbia celebrities, though, had to wait until as late as 1923 before finally becoming double-sided, and for the next few years many of the original recordings were being coupled to produce new double-sided discs. Thus a record issued in 1924 might well contain recordings from say 1905 and 1907. *(To be continued.)*



Mevagissey  
Cornwall

22.4.78

*Dear Mr. Brott,*

*As a Society member, I am a collector of phonographs, gramophones and records. Recently the Daily Mail published an article referring to a performance of Orpheus by Kathleen Ferrier and stating that no recording of Miss Ferrier in an operatic role had previously been issued. I have in my collection an album of records of this artiste issued by Decca in which Kathleen Ferrier sings this part, and write to enquire whether you or any other member may assist in providing background information to this album, as my possession seems to totally contradict the newspaper article.*

*Your assistance will be much appreciated, meanwhile I have also written to Decca on the subject.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Jo Rundle*

*N.B. Serial nos of records are - K1656 to K1662, 7 records.*



March 10th 1978

Dear Bill,

My first encounter with a Phonograph could hardly be termed a pleasant one, even now, although almost fifty years have "stretched their weary lengths between", the incident remains indelibly impressed on my memory grooves. The year was 1929, I was eighteen years old and employed on my father's small farm in West Wales. A neighbouring farmer was in the habit of dropping in often on a winter's evening to listen to our collection of popular songs of the day, played on an old Mead horn gramophone.

So enthusiastic he became that he invested in a new Columbia table grand, and the following day invited me over to his place, with the request that I brought a few of my records to try his new machine out. I agreed, and that same evening found a company, the farmer who was a bachelor, Miss Williams his sister who kept house for him, and a young farm hand who lived in with them, gathered round a roaring log fire in the farmhouse kitchen.

The Columbia stood on the table awaiting my attention, we got down to it right away. About half-way through the repertoire Miss Williams remarked. "We have one of those old-fashion gramophones here, you know, the ones with the little round records". I had often heard of phonographs, but up to then had never seen one, my curiosity was immediately aroused, I asked her to fetch it. "Nothing doing", shouted the farmer, "leave it alone, anyway we don't know where it is now". "Oh! do look for it Miss Williams". I begged, the young lad joined in my entreaties, and as a result, despite her brother's threats and protests she ascended to the lumber room above the kitchen.

We heard her rummaging around for a while, then a shout, "One of you give a hand up here", came from the loft. Eventually a large tea chest was manhandled down the stairs, after a layer of dust had been removed it was opened and found to contain a curiously shaped little cabinet, a large horn, tripod and a quantity of cased cylinders. The cabinet was opened disclosing an Edison Phonograph, on being asked how it was operated Miss Williams confessed she had forgotten, adding that, "It was ordered all the way from America when we were children, but it hasn't been used since the war. (1914-18).

Possessing some mechanical ability I soon had it assembled and playing. We were listening to Billy Williams when a most horrifying thing happened, my hand was resting on the case when a huge spider, the biggest and fattest I'd ever seen, emerged from the belt aperture and disappeared up my left sleeve.

Now if there is any creature on earth I abhor, it is a spider, I was momentarily paralyzed then recovering with a start swung my arm so violently to dislodge it, that I banged my hand against the table and suffered with numbed fingers for the remainder of the evening. "Serve you jolly well right", laughed the farmer, "you had no business to disturb the poor thing, he was quiet enough till you came here". The spider made good his escape across the floor into the skirting.

The incident did not altogether mar our entertainment, hearing the old records once again must have activated a nostalgic chord in the old farmer's breast, for he went so far as to suggest that I came over again one night to have another session on the Edison. I never went, the thought of more confrontations with members of the clan Arachnida might have proved a deterrent.

M. John (Mr.)

(One of your newest members)

# Nordica Portrait Hung In Met Opera House

Invitations were sent out by the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Opera Association inviting those who received them to a presentation of two portraits, one of Lillian Nordica, gift of Norman Kelley, the other one of Grace Moore, gift of her brother, Richard L. Moore, Jr. Some fifty guests and representatives from the Opera Association gathered to admire the two portraits on view before they were hung permanently in the Opera House. The event took place in Founders Hall where the extensive collection of portraits of former artists of the Met are shown.

Before the presentation ceremony, the guests were served refreshments through the courtesy of an Honorary Director, Mrs. William Francis Gibbs who was not present but was represented by her secretary, Miss Tallarico.

The ceremony consisted of an acceptance speech by Langdon Van Norden, Executive Director and Honorary Chairman of the Metropolitan Opera Association. In this he gave a short tribute to each artist being honored, with appropriate remarks concerning the career of each one. He then thanked the donors for their generosity in donating the portraits.

A portrait of Mme. Nordica has long been desired by the Met. She is possibly the last of the artists of the Golden Age of Opera to reach a permanent home in this institution of world wide fame.

The story of the acquisition

of this portrait is a long one. In 1960, Norman Kelley, three years on the roster of artists at the Met and the only man from Maine ever to receive a Metropolitan contract, conceived the idea of having the people of Maine contribute and purchase this portrait. It had been at the old Met for a season, courtesy of the artists, S. Burtis Baker but funds were not then available for the Met itself to buy it. Funds from the citizens of Maine were small after a plea was made on Bangor TV, when Mr. Kelley appeared in a personal plea accompanied by Ben Stinchfield, Publicity Director for the Nordica Memorial Association. Later, to assure the eventual purchase of the portrait, Mr. Kelley made a substantial payment to Mr. Baker, the artist. Complications arose during the years and Mr. Baker died. Success came this last year when Mr. Kelley made the final payment. Thus it is due to him that Nordica is again at the Met. The funds which were sent in in 1960 were sufficient to pay for the cleaning and varnishing of the portrait, also for a new frame. A plaque was given by Homer Butler in whose home the portrait was prepared for presentation.

The artist, S. Burtis Baker is the one who painted the last portrait made of Nordica, which now hangs in the Lillian Nordica Auditorium in Merrill Hall at the University of Maine at Farmington. This he did in 1911. He had been asked by Nordica's husband, George Washington Young, to paint one of her in each of her roles. But, of course this was never

done as she soon started on the fateful final trip. Mr. Baker came to Farmington, stayed at the Homestead, copied the face from the 1911 portrait, one which he had made from life, and made this one of the diva as Brunnhilde. The original costume is on permanent exhibition at the Homestead museum so that is authentic in the portrait. The portrait is the same size as the one done in 1911, approximately five by seven feet.

From the Board of Directors, those who were present for the ceremony aside from Mr. Van Norden, were Anthony Bliss, Managing Director and Executive Director of the Association, Lauder Greenway, an Honorary Director. To arrange for the affair was Alfred Hubay in charge of Special Services. The official photographer of the Met was also there.

Other distinguished guests included Regina Resnick, still a star at the Met, Ira Glackens, author of the biography of Mme. Nordica, the "Yankee Diva", Mrs. Mary Ellis Peltz, first editor of Opera News and long time friend of the Nordica Association. It was she who came among the first visitors after the extensive collections made the shrine a museum. She wrote an article for the Opera News: Brunnhilde in a Maine Farmhouse. A part of this has always been used on the brochure given guests at the Homestead. Wilfred Pelletier, a most interested guest. He was over 20 years a conductor at the Met.

It had always been the wish of the artist, S. Burtis Baker, that his portrait finally be in the Opera collection. Thus, two of the most personally interested guests were his widow, Mrs. Kathleen and his daughter,

Mrs. Nancy Oppenheim, accompanied by her young daughter. Mrs. Baker had come from Washington where Mr. Baker had his studio and home. Mrs. Oppenheim had personally transported the large portrait from there to New York last spring.

Maine was represented by Mrs. Lois Roy, a long time member of the Opera Guild, Life Member of the Nordica Association, who flew in from Denmark where she and her husband Joseph Roy now live; Frederick S. Hall, many years Public Relations man with the Boys Club of New York; Douglas Smith, son of Mr. and Mrs. Philip Smith, the caretakers at the Homestead in Farmington; and Ben Stinchfield, Publicity Director of the Nordica Association, and of course, Norman Kelley.

Nordica was known for her interest in young American artists and frequently had one with her on a program, as Albert Spalding and Maud Powell, both violinists who made fame in later years. Thus it seemed quite appropriate that a younger American Artist share the honor of being permanently in the Opera House at this ceremony, the artist being Grace Moore. Nordica would be the first to approve. But, what a coincidence that both these American singers died far from home, both tragically, Nordica from pneumonia after a storm at sea when the ship had to be free of passengers and she suffered from exposure; Miss Moore in a fatal plane accident in Denmark.

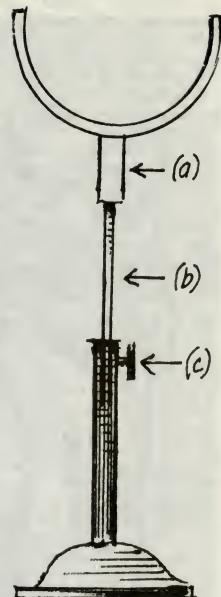
In an interview Nordica told of her lucky number - 7; her name, Lillian and Nordica, both seven letters, seven in her birth date, now this honor given on Nov. 17, 1977 - three sevens!





*The accompanying article by Ben Stinchfield appeared on 29 November 1977 in the Franklin Journal, the newspaper of Farmington, Maine, the birthplace of Lillian Nordica (1857-1914). Until recently, Nordica was the only great star of the Metropolitan at the turn-of-the-century "Golden Age" of Opera" not to be represented by a portrait in the opera house.*


*The "fateful trip" was a farewell tour of the world on which she died; at Batavia in Java, of exposure following a shipwreck. The Homestead is the farmhouse where she was born, now a museum housing her costumes and personal effects. Nordica is the only singer so commemorated.*



- (a) *Brass tubing as swivel*
- (b) *Rod to fit the Edison stand tube*
- (c) *Adjusting Screw*





  
Fulwood,  
Preston, Lancs. PR2/2TU

8th February, 1978

Dear Mr. Brott,

I am enclosing herewith a couple of photographs taken of my phonograph collection, with two home made paper mache horns, which my grandson (the young man in the picture) and I have manufactured.

We covered the original Edison Fireside horn with craft paper held together at the edges with a strip of 1" masking tape then gradually built up the horn with strips of newspaper etc. using plenty of home made flour paste, to 1/8" thick, allowing each layer to thoroughly dry before applying the next, this took us a lot of patience, but was well worth the time spent. When thoroughly dry we slid the paper mache horn off the original one and coated it inside and out with Matt black paint, three coats and finished the outside with lengths of 2" black shiny cloth tape giving same a final coat of black gloss enamel. The shape and size is identical with the original Edison horn, as you may see in the photograph.

The larger horns is 3'6" in length and has a flare of 12" This horn was made entirely by my grandson - he made a cardboard cone and built up with strips of paper to 1/8" thickness using a whole telephone directory cut up in strips "yellow pages and all". The flare he made from a separate cone built up the same way, and making a flange to slip on to the horn- this was glued on and bound with a strip of tape. The horn was painted similarly as the other one but the flare was painted in gold paint.

Both horns look very nice and give a very pleasing tone.

Using the bottom half of an original Edison horn stand I made a useful crutch for the large horn. I bent a piece of curtain rod to the contour of the horn and soldered same to a piece of brass tubing placing this over a piece of rod to slide into the stand tube, I have made a rough sketch of same.

Looking forward to receiving my next copy of Hillandale News.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas A. Hewitt .

# Tally Ho! Tally Ho!

*THE RT. HON. VISCOUNT OF GALWAY'S HUNTING CALLS - "H.M.V." 09274.*

This record was played at one of the past London meetings of the Society to which each of the members attending brought along two discs to play over.

Our Honorary President, Mr George Frow, brought the disc along as one of his choices, which raised many a smile and chuckle during its run of four minutes or so, caused by the many strange sounds and ejaculations, the significance of which escaped me entirely and, I daresay, also kept other members present in a state of mystification.

I have since heard that our "Pathe Expert", Mr Len Watts, has acquired a copy of this unique recording, which was later coupled with Sir Wilfred Grenfell's account of being adrift on an ice floe, in the black labelled "D" prefixed series of H.M.V.

The recording by the Viscount was issued in January 1914 and one of the trade periodicals printed a resumé of what was on the recording as recorded in the studio by this Master of Foxhounds enacting a "mock-up" scene, typical of what could take place during a fox hunt.

The royalties from this recording made by the Gramophone Coy. Ltd. were devoted to "The Earlier Pensions Fund of the Hunt Servants' Benefit Society".

For those who were present at the meeting, when the copy of this record was played, and for all past, present and future owners of copies of this record, the following is the resumé of the recording as printed in 1914.

"The master who is hunting the hounds, steadies those who are over-eager to get into covert before his whips are in position to view the fox away. He cheers them into covert, and speaks to them while drawing. A single hound opens on a line betokening a line, and the Master encourages him and cheers the others to cry. Hounds open, and, "it's a fox for a hundred!"

"The Master, standing in a ride, views his fox over; a "Holloa" from his first whip tells him the fox is away. He gallops to the Holloa and blows his hounds out of covert. The field, anxious for a good start, have to be checked for impetuosity. He steadies his hounds, who are inclined to flash over the line; they settle to it, and he cheers on the tail hounds.

Hounds are at fault, for the first time. He catches hold of them and hits it off back, and he jumps a big fence at which his horse blunders.

The fox is beat, and he cheers his hounds to view. Whoo-Whoop! They have him.

He keeps his hounds back while his Whip performs the obsequies of the Chase. He takes the carcass up, tempts his shy hounds and throws it to them.

Fifty minutes is the time, and the order is "Home"; he blows his horn to convey that fact to the field."

So now you will understand what the recording was (or is) about — or will you? I'm not so sure that I do!

If collecting recordings of "blood sports" is your speciality, then this record is a "must" for your massive collection of kindred recordings! It was available on H.M.V. D.376, as a later re-issue.

**Frank Andrews**



# John Bull Records Appeal – Results

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In response to my appeal for information with reference to John Bull Records in the “B” prefixed catalogue series, as published in last April’s issue of the Hillandale News, I am pleased to report that our member, Paul Temple, was able to fill one of our “Blank Entries”. Has any other member any information they can submit about the John Bull Records in this “B” series, which is still required?

If you have no John Bull Records with “B” prefixes, have you any with “H” prefixes? Our “Blank Entries” list for this series is as follows:-

H1 to H10, H13 to H18, H21 to H24, H29, H30, H34, H35, H38, H39, H40, H42, H46, H48, H49, H50, H52 to H55, H58 to H63, H68 to H71, H73, H74, H76, H82, H89, H90, H93 and beyond.

Note, the lower numbers all appear to be allotted to one side of each John Bull Record until number H89 or H90 when the H. numbers become common to both sides. We know that H88 was used for one side only, and we know that H91 was used for the two sides of one disc, “A” and “B” suffixes being used for distinguishing the sides.

Please look at April’s listing of Blank Entry “B” series, and check your collections for any you may have, and against the “H” series listed above.

There were no monthly release supplements with John Bull Records, nor were complete catalogues ever freely available to the public and dealers, so this brand of disc is particularly difficult to document, and the co-operation of collectors is all-important if there is ever to be a comprehensive and near-definitive listing of the John Bull Records.

My grateful thanks to Paul Temple for his submission is herewith recorded.

Please send full and comprehensive details about any John Bull Record whose number appears on this, and the former list, to me, Frank Andrews, [REDACTED] Road, Neasden N.W.10.

Thanking you in anticipation.

P.S. Some time back I appealed for information about Columbia 12” diam. records which brought forth some useful and needed information. The Columbia project is now completed, although we are still short of many matrix numbers, and the copy is now ready for the Oakwood Press whom we hope will publish it as some time during the present year. The provisional title will be “The Columbia Catalogue” Early Columbia Celebrity and 12 inch. Standard Records in the U.K. 1902 to 1956.

# A Gramophone Glossary

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- Cabinet** (as in 'Cabinet model', 'Cabinet grand' etc.): Floor-standing enclosed-horn machine.
- Centre-start:** up to about 1915, Pathe disc records had a groove which started at the inside and played outwards. This had the theoretical advantage that the climax of the recording, usually the most heavily recorded part, came when the linear speed of the track under the needle was at its greatest.
- Console:** a much-abused term, this refers specifically to cabinet models of horizontal rather than vertical proportions; the cabinet appears to be wider than it is high (usually with record compartments on one or both sides of the gramophone section.) Also known as 'Horizontal Grand'.
- Diaphragm:** taut membrane in a recorder, reproducer or soundbox whose vibrations convert sound-waves into mechanical movements or vice-versa. Usually round. Materials include glass, mica, ivory, aluminium, copper and various compositions.
- Goose-neck Tone-arm:** Introduced by Victor G&T in 1903, this type of arm has a U-tube at the front, carrying the soundbox and mounted in a T-joint on the main part of the arm. The U-tube is usually of parallel bore, although some later ones were tapered. From 1925 the goose-neck was gradually displaced by the Swan-neck (q.v.)
- Gramophone:** Talking machine using lateral-cut discs. Originally a trade name, but in general use in the U.K. after 1910.
- Hill and dale:** system of recording in which the sound modulations are indented or incised vertically in the record groove. Also known as 'Phono cut'. Such records are usually played with a jewel-tipped stylus.
- Horn Gramophone:** In a sense, most acoustic gramophones have a horn, but the term is normally used to describe specifically those with an open horn. Laymen often refer to horn models as 'Table' models, which should be avoided as it leads to confusion with the table grand, a specific type in itself, and virtually all horn gramophones are designed to rest on a table or similar support, anyway.
- Hornless:** table gramophone with enclosed horn but no lid, usually of square proportions like a horn model, the tone-arm and rear section of the horn projecting from the back of the case.
- Lateral-cut:** system of recording in which the modulations are formed in the sides of the groove, which is of uniform depth. Also known as 'Needle-cut'. Such records were normally played with steel or vegetable needles until the advent of lightweight pick-ups.
- Phonograph:** talking machine playing hill-and-dale records (usually, but not always cylinders). Exceptions include the Edison Disc Phonographs and, strictly speaking, disc Pathephones. (This distinction between Phonographs and Gramophones does not apply in American usage.
- Record-player:** Electric playing deck consisting of a motor, turntable and pick-up, designed to play through the loudspeaker of a radio set. Today, the term is in general use for self-contained machines with their own speakers, but still with an implication of portability.
- Reproducer:** that part of a phonograph containing the diaphragm and stylus. In Great Britain the term is generally associated with phonographs (q.v.), the equivalent part of a gramophone being the soundbox.
- Soundbox:** that part of a gramophone containing the diaphragm and stylus-bar, into the end of which fits the needle, c.f. Reproducer.
- Stylus:** pivoted member with pointed tip for following the record-groove, the other end being attached or connected to the diaphragm. The tip can be of sapphire, diamond, steel, bamboo or other material.
- Stylus-bar:** main part of the stylus, excluding the jewel or needle.
- Swan-neck tone-arm:** type of arm introduced in 1925 in which the main part of the arm is bent to an angle of less than 90°, replacing the T-joint of the goose-neck.
- Table Grand/Table Model:** a totally enclosed table gramophone with a lid and, usually on pre-1930 models, doors enclosing the horn.
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THE HILLDALE NEWS is published on behalf of the CITY OF LONDON  
 PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY by Bill Brott, [REDACTED] West Finchley, London, N3 1PG  
 to whom all articles should be sent.

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Designed and Printed by Flo-Print, 24 Upper Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.  
 Telephone: Tunbridge Wells 25158